

THE WEST KERRY POLKA SET

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First Figure - Ladies Chain (Polkas)		144 bars
1	Double reverse house: for the first 2 steps of each house the gent reverses the lady into the next place on the R. They then house 6 bars back to place and repeat the whole movement.	16 bars
2	Lead around, with waist hold.	8 bars
3	Ladies R hand star round (4 bars) to face partners and swing with waltz hold. (12 bars).	16 bars
4	<i>Top couples:</i> Ladies chain R hands in the centre, L elbow to turn the opposite gent, R hands in the centre and into waltz hold with their partners who have moved across into the ladies' positions.	8 bars
	Reverse house around each other.	8 bars
5	Double reverse house. Lead around. Ladies R hand star and swing.	40 bars
6	<i>Side couples</i> chain and reverse house.	16 bars
7	Double reverse house. Lead around, finishing with a stamp and clap on the last beat of the 8 th bar.	24 bars
Second Figure - First Show (Polkas)		192 bars
1	Double reverse house. Lead around.	24 bars
2	<i>1st top couple</i> double reverse house within the set.	16 bars
3	Double reverse house. Lead around.	24 bars
4	<i>2nd top couple</i> double reverse house within the set.	16 bars
5	Double reverse house. Lead around.	24 bars
6	<i>1st side couple</i> (L of 1 st top couple) double reverse house within the set.	16 bars
7	Double reverse house. Lead around.	24 bars
8	<i>2nd side couple</i> double reverse house within the set.	16 bars
9	Double reverse house. Lead around.	24 bars
Third Figure - The Slide		192 bars
1	Full slide: All couples take waltz hold and slide towards the centre 1, 2, 1, 2, and back, 2, 123 (4 bars). They then house around to the opposite place (4 bars) and repeat the movement to get back home (8 bars).	16 bars
2	Lead around.	8 bars
3	<i>Top couples:</i> Ladies chain.	8 bars
	Reverse house around each other.	8 bars
4	Full slide.	24 bars

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	Lead around.	
5	<i>Top couples</i> chain and reverse house.	16 bars
6	Full slide. Lead around.	24 bars
7	<i>Side couples</i> chain and reverse house.	16 bars
8	Full slide. Lead around.	24 bars
9	<i>Side couples</i> chain and reverse house.	16 bars
10	Full slide. Lead around.	24 bars
Fourth Figure - Second Show (Polkas)		152 bars
1	Double lead around: Couples lead around anti-clockwise with crossed hand hold in front. The ladies twirl clockwise under the gents' raised arms on the 8 th bar, keeping hands held, and couples lead around anti-clockwise for a second time back to place.	16 bars
2	<i>Top couples:</i> <i>1st couple</i> double reverse house within the set.	16 bars
	<i>Both couples</i> slide and change: they slide into the set and back (4 bars) and house across to the opposite place (4 bars). The movement is repeated back to place (8 bars).	16 bars
	<i>2nd couple</i> double reverse house within the set.	16 bars
	<i>Both couples</i> slide and change.	16 bars
3	<i>Side couples</i> now dance 2.	64 bars
Fifth Figure - Ladies Move On (Slides)		224 bars
1	Double reverse house. Lead around.	24 bars
2	Circle: all join hands in a circle and advance and retire twice.	8 bars
	Ladies RH and gents LH stars: Ladies take R hands in the centre and wheel around to pass three gents, drop hands and dance out of the set to turn in clockwise behind the fourth gent (4 bars). Gents take L hands in the centre and wheel around to their own place to face their new partners, with backs to the centre, and take waltz hold (4 bars).(see ENDNOTE)	8 bars
3	Swing new partners.	8 bars
4	Double reverse house around. Lead around. Circle. Ladies R and gents LH stars. Swing new partners.	48 bars
5	Double reverse house around. Lead around. Circle. Ladies R and gents LH stars. Swing new partners.	48 bars
6	Double reverse house around.	48 bars

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	Lead around. Circle. Ladies R and gents LH stars. Swing own partners.	
7	Double reverse house. Lead around.	24 bars
Sixth Figure - The Hornpipe		120 bars
1	House around.	8 bars
2	Double round: couples dance around the house with the doubled step, dancing - heel step, heel step, heel step, heel step (2 full turns in 2 bars), into each place.	8 bars
3	Ladies move on , walking round to the next gent on their R while the gents stand.	8 bars
4	House around. Double round. Ladies move on.	24 bars
5	House around. Double round. Ladies move on.	24 bars
6	House around. Double round. Ladies move on to own partners	24 bars
7	House around. Double round.	

ENDNOTE

It appears that this movement is rarely, if ever, danced nowadays in the west of Ireland as described here.

The current version now is:

Ladies RH star and swing: Ladies take R hands in the centre and wheel threequarters around the set, drop hands and take waltz hold with the new gent (4 bars). New couples swing. (12 bars).

This replaces the **Swing** at **3**

SOURCES

Timmy McCarthy at the first Cork/Kerry Dance Weekend in Dingle in November 1993, plus reference to the video "A Feast of Irish Set Dancing" produced by Oilean Productions, in which the set is danced by a group of dancers from the West Kerry Gaeltacht.

The end of most movements danced in this set is emphasised by a stamp on the gent's L and the lady's R foot on the last beat of the 8th bar. The last movement of each figure is finished with both a stamp and a clap on the same beat.

The Hornpipe Figure is rarely danced these days. It should only be attempted by dancers whose doubling is competent, controlled and, above all, unlikely to risk the safety of other dancers.